News Releases
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Tourism Culture and Recreation
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NL Summer Games Track and Field Events to be Held in Stephenville

The track and field facilities in Stephenville will receive a $35,000 upgrade from the Provincial Government to enable the town to hold the track and field component of the Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games, to be hosted by the City of Corner Brook August 9-16.

The Honourable Clyde Jackman, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Recreation, the Honourable Joan Burke, MHA for St. George's – Stephenville East, and Tony Cornect, MHA for the District of Port au Port, made the announcement today during a tour of the facilities, located adjacent to Stephenville High School.

"The department investigated options to ensure track and field athletes competing in the games have access to the best possible venue," said Minister Jackman. "Following consultation with the City of Corner Brook, the Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games organizing committee, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Athletics Association, it was determined that the existing track and field facilities in Stephenville, with appropriate upgrades, would serve as the best location for track and field events."

More than 1,500 athletes, coaches, managers and officials are expected to participate in the games. Today's announcement brings Provincial Government support for the event to a total of $235,000. The Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation also covers the $150,000 cost of participants' travel to the host city.

Minister Burke said the inclusion of Stephenville in the games' events will generate economic activity in the region and leave a recreation and sports legacy for the town and for future athletes.

"This is the latest in a series of initiatives that are helping this town grow," said Minister Burke. "The Arts and Culture Centre has received $699,000 for upgrades. Over $500,000 has been invested for infrastructure improvements at College of the North Atlantic in Stephenville, and Stephenville Crossing. Funding has been provided for additional support staff and to improve the level of service at the Stephenville Government Service Centre. Clearly, these and other investments are not only good for current residents of Stephenville, but good for the future of our town."

Mr. Cornect said the upgrade will benefit residents throughout the west coast. "Improving these facilities in Stephenville, coincides with the goals and objectives outlined in the province's recreation and sport strategy; *Active, Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador,"* said Mr. Cornect. "Renovating this existing piece of sport infrastructure will help meet the needs of residents throughout the region as we strive to achieve a vibrant, healthy population."

Deputy Mayor Mary Ann Murphy of Corner Brook said the city welcomes the opportunity to make the 2008 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games a truly west coast event. "This investment by the Provincial Government in this track facility for the games will be of great benefit to all communities on the west coast, as it enhances Stephenville's current sports infrastructure up to Newfoundland and Labrador Athletics Association standards," said Ms. Murphy. "This certainly should encourage other west coast athletes who are interested in athletics to become involved when Stephenville hosts the meet. The City of Corner Brook thanks the Town of Stephenville for stepping up to assist us with the games."

Mayor Tom O'Brien of Stephenville said that the town is thrilled to be participating in the Summer Games. "Holding the track and field portion of the Summer Games in Stephenville is an excellent example of what can be accomplished when government and communities co-operate and partner with one another," said Mayor O'Brien.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Games, initiated in 1974, is a program of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. Held every second year, alternating winter and summer, the games is the largest multi-sport event staged for the youth of the province, bringing together young athletes from ages 11-18 from all regions, as well as from St. Pierre and Miquelon, to share in the spirit of athletic competition.

For further information on the 2008 Newfoundland and Labrador Summer Games, visit: http://www.nlgames.ca/

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